

AMERICAN RED CROSS EXTENDING ASSISTANCE FOR EVACUEES IN HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 12, 2005 – Tens of thousands of Hurricane Katrina evacuees are without resources for accommodations, so the American Red Cross, in cooperation with FEMA, is extending its temporary housing assistance program for an additional 14 days and will continue to grant extensions every 14 days until other options are available.

“We’re two weeks out from Hurricane Katrina and many people are facing a housing crisis. They may have gone to stay with family, but they can’t stay there indefinitely. They may be in a town where a small shelter is closing. Or the authorities may have airlifted them to a city somewhere and put them in a hotel for a set number of days,” said Michael Brackney, manager of client service program development for the American Red Cross.

“Rather than have those people uprooted again and have them go to a shelter when their current situation runs out, we want them to know the Red Cross and FEMA will cover the cost of an additional 14 days in a hotel and will continue that support until other housing is available.”

Evacuees who need this assistance must contact front desk staff at their hotel to arrange to extend their stay for an additional 14 days, if space is available. They will be asked for evidence of their pre-disaster address, which must be in a ZIP code presidentially declared as a disaster area, and for the number of people needing accommodations.

American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. You can help the victims of this and thousands of other disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to those in need. Call 1-800-HELP NOW or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting www.redcross.org.